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That such a theatre would also help to develop the art of play-writing in this country, I firmly believe. To have their plays interpreted by so great a company would attract to dramatic work writers who, while in sympathy with the stage, do not consider that it offers "a fair field and no favor." One of the most eminent of our managers once said to me, "give me an American and a French play of equal merit and I will take the French one." So unpatriotic a decision would not, I hope, be often arrived at, if the manager were assisted in his selection by a council of American actors. I would not urge that plays written here should be produced in preference to superior foreign work, but all things being equal, in a representative American theatre American plays should have precedence.

JULIAN MAGNUS.

## II.

### "THE CALIFORNIA HUNDRED FOOT LAW."

I HAVE read with great interest Mr. Redpath's note on Electoral Reform in the October number of the *NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW*, in which Mr. Rice's electoral bill is given at length. In no way can this law, I think, be improved, unless by the insertion therein of the California statute known as the "Hundred foot law," being §§ 1,192 to 1,195 of the Political Code, which is as follows:

"§ 1,192. No ticket or ballot must on the day of election be given or delivered to or received by any person, except the inspector or a judge acting as inspector, within one hundred feet of the polling place.

"§ 1,193. No person must, on the day of election, fold any ticket or unfold any ballot which he intends to use in voting, within one hundred feet of the polling place.

"§ 1,194. No person must, on the day of election, within one hundred feet of the polling place, exhibit to another, in any manner by which the contents may become known, any ticket or ballot which he intends to use in voting.

"§ 1,195. No person must, on the day of election, within one hundred feet of the polling place, request another person to exhibit or disclose the contents of any ticket or ballot which such other person intends to use in voting."

Under the working of these provisions of the California law, the tickets are always printed and distributed several days in advance, and interested parties afford to every elector an opportunity to procure and fix his ticket days before the election, so that each elector may come to the polling place with a ballot already prepared. Then, if a ticket or ballot is delivered to him and coercion attempted, he is at least afforded some opportunity to vote his own choice, for no ticket can be delivered to him within one hundred feet of the polling place, and he has that distance within which to change a ballot delivered to him for one he has already prepared. Again, independent of the question of coercion, there is another consideration founded on the well-known fact that in cities clubs are formed for the avowed purpose of selling the votes of the members. If the seller has one hundred feet in which to change his ballot, and no mark can be used on it, he will have no means of establishing the fact that he has voted for any given person, and when the ability to prove this is taken away from him his occupation is gone—for the men who would sell their votes are not persons in whom any trust or faith are put.

GEOFFREY CHAMPLIN.

## III.

### MISTAKES OF CARDINAL GIBBONS.

THE amiable character and undoubted piety as well as the exalted rank of Cardinal Gibbons, are well calculated to protect him from the criticism to which any less distinguished writer would be subjected. But, as truth owes no allegiance

to rank, it is right that when a cardinal errs his mistakes should be pointed out as plainly as if he were an anonymous journalist.

Cardinal Gibbons instances the desecration of the Christian Sabbath as one of the dangers that threaten our civilization. But whoever has traveled in Catholic countries in Europe must admit that the tendency in America is neither more nor less than our gradual approximation to the continental or Catholic and our recoil from the English or Puritan method of observing the Sabbath. In Spain, Italy, France, and other Catholic countries,—or in the distinctive Catholic portions of them,—theatres and concerts and public gardens and public institutions are open as on week days and liberally patronized by all classes of Catholics. In Ireland—said to be the most loyal Catholic country on the globe—political meetings are regularly held on Sunday, and are attended by the people and clergy without distinction of creed. No visible deteriorating influence marks these customs, which are justified on the saying of the Master, that the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.

It is against the rigid enforcement of gloomy rules founded in the narrow and ascetic faith of Calvin, which became the creed of Puritanism, not against an orderly and respectful observance of a Christian institution, that America is quietly rebelling. We are at war with the Calvinistic, not the Christian Sabbath. I see no cause of alarm in this tendency. Rome and Berlin are certainly more moral cities than Edinburgh or Glasgow, and yet in the Continental cities the ascetic observance of Sabbath that characterizes the Scotch cities is notable by its absence.

It is absurd to describe Divorce as a twin-sister of Polygamy. There can be no such thing as "successive polygamy." Monogamy is the marriage of one man to one woman; polygamy the marriage of one man to several women. Divorce dissolves the civil contract of marriage as absolutely as death. When a person is divorced, therefore, no moral nor religious, nor civil law is broken by a second marriage; and to describe a marriage after a divorce as successive polygamy is to confound the profoundest moral distinctions in the interests of a theological dogma. Divorce, as a rule, leads to purer marital relations, and well-guarded and honestly administered divorce laws, instead of being a source of danger to the Republic, are one of the minor causes of the higher home life that characterizes America over states where divorces are practically denied to all but the aristocratic classes. There are two American States where the dogma of the Catholic Church is also the law of divorce—where there is no divorce, save for adultery; but neither New York nor South Carolina would be selected by any honest investigator who has ever lived in them as the best examples of a pure American social life.

Polygamy is indefensible and should be rooted out of our body politic at any sacrifice. It is monstrous that this social cancer should have been inoculated into our system. Whenever the churches of America, Catholic and Protestant, stilling for a season their theological storms, unite to demand the extirpation of polygamy, it will be abolished; but not till then. The remedy is in the hands of the churches; for, thus united, they could compel any legislation that they should see fit to demand. Mormonism *has* the sanction of the civil law, the Cardinal to the contrary notwithstanding; for whatever the law tolerates, when it has the power to extinguish it, the law *does* practically sanction. I trust that the Cardinal will lead in this needed reform. With his genius, his prestige, and his power, he could destroy this "Goliath of the Philistines" single-handed. I appeal to him to begin the good work.

JOHN BALL, JR.